

Amendments to the Claims:

This Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-17 (canceled).

18. (new) In a license issuing system in which a license-issuing computer, a seller computer, and a purchaser computer are coupled to communicate with each other, wherein:

the seller computer requests input of client information, product information and license program information to the purchaser computer;

the purchaser computer transfers the client information, the product information and the license program information to the seller computer;

the seller computer transfers the product information and the license program information, without the client information to the license-issuing computer; and

the license-issuing computer issues a license key for the program specified by the license program information to the purchaser computer through the seller computer upon authentication of the product information received from the seller computer.

19. (new) A license key issuing system for use by three computers coupled via a network, the system comprising:

a purchaser computer for receiving client information, product information and license program information;

a seller computer connected to receive the client information, the product information and the license program information from the purchaser computer, and in response providing the product information and the license program information, but not the client information, to the license-issuing computer; to a license-issuing computer, together with a request for a license key;

the license-issuing computer issuing a license key to the seller computer in response to a request from the purchaser computer upon authentication of the product information;

the seller computer then transmitting the license key to the purchaser computer upon receiving it from the license-issuing computer..

20. (new) A license-issuing computer connected to a network for issuing a license key, the license-issuing computer including:

a program which allows the license-issuing computer to extract product information and license program information from product information, and which does not allow the license-issuing computer to store client information, the license program information, and client information provided by an individual to a seller computer; and

a program which authenticates the product information and issues a license key for a program specified by the license program information.

21. (new) A license-issuing computer which is connected to a network for issuing a license key, the license-issuing computer including:

a program which allows the license-issuing computer to receive a product number, a license program name, and trial license key, but not client information, from a purchaser who enters that information into a seller computer; and

a program which authenticates the product number, and in response issues a trial license key to allow use of a program specified by the license program name for a given time upon receiving the product number and the license program name.

22. (new) A license-issuing computer as in claim 21 characterized in that the license-issuing computer issues a license for a program installed in a data storage system.

23. (new) A license-issuing computer connected to a network for issuing license keys, the license-issuing computer including:

a program in which the license-issuing computer receives a product number, a license program name, but not client information, from a purchaser;

a program in which the license-issuing computer performs authentication of the product number and issues a trial license key to allow limited use of the license program; and

a program in which the license-issuing computer authenticates the trial license key when the license-issuing computer receives the license program name and the trial license key, and which issues a paid license key.

24. (new) A seller computer which requests the issuance of a license key to a license-issuing computer in response to a request from a purchaser computer through a network, the seller computer including:

a program which requests client information, product information and license program information from the purchaser computer through the network;

a program which receives the client information, the product information and the license program information from the purchaser computer, and which transmits only the product information and the license program information to the license-issuing computer, and

a program which receives the license key from the license-issuing computer and transmits the license key to the purchaser computer.

25. (new) A seller computer which requests the issuance of a license key to a license-issuing computer in response to a request from a purchaser computer through a network, the seller computer including :

a program which requests input of client information, product information and license program information to the purchaser computer through the network,

a program which receives the client information, the product information and the license program information from the purchaser computer through the network and transmits only the product information and the license program information to the license-issuing computer, and

a program which receives the license key from the license-issuing computer and transmits the license key to the purchaser computer.

26. (new) A seller computer which requests a trial license key to allow use of a computer program for a trial period, and a special license key which extends the trial period of the trial license key in response to a request from a purchaser computer through a network, the seller computer including:

means for receiving input of a product number, a license program name, and a trial license key from a purchaser;

means for providing a license key received from a license-issuing computer;
a program which requests input of client information, the product number, and the license program name to the purchaser computer;
a program which receives the client information, the product information and the license program information from the purchaser computer and transmits only one of (1) the product information and the license program information to the license-issuing computer or (2) the product number, the license program name and the trial license key to the license-issuing computer; and
a program which receives the trial license key from the license-issuing computer and transmits the license key to the purchaser computer.

27. (new) A method for a seller computer to request a license key from a license-issuing computer in response to a request from a purchaser computer through a network, the method comprising:

a step in which the seller computer receives client information, a product number and a license program name from a purchaser computer;

a step in which the seller computer transmits the product number and the license program name, but not the client information, to the license-issuing computer;

a step in which the seller computer receives a trial license key to allow use of the program for a given period;

a step in which the seller computer transmits the license key to the purchaser computer;

a step in which the seller computer inputs the client information, the product number, the license program name and the trial license key communicated from a purchaser therein,

a step in which the seller computer transmits the product number, the license program name and the trial license key to the license-issuing computer,

a step in which the seller computer receives a special license key for extending a trial period by the trial license key from the license-issuing computer, and

a step in which the seller computer outputs the special license key and transmits the special license key to the purchaser.

28. (new) A licensing issuing method of a license issuing system comprising a license-issuing computer, a seller computer, a purchaser computer, and a network which connects the license-issuing computer, the seller computer and the purchaser computer, wherein

the license-issuing computer requests input of client information, product information and license program information to the purchaser computer through the seller computer;

the purchaser computer transfers the client information, the product information and the license program information to the seller computer in response to the request from the license-issuing computer;

the seller computer transfers the product information and the license program information, but not the client information, to the license-issuing computer; and

the license-issuing computer issues a license key for a program specified by the license program information upon authentication of the product information.

29. (new) A license issuing method of a license-issuing computer which is connected to a network and performs the issuance of a license key through the network, the license issuing method including:

a step in which the license-issuing computer receives product information, license program information, but not client information, from data input by a purchaser;

a step in which the license-issuing computer authenticates the product information; and

a step in which the license-issuing computer issues a license key for a program specified by the license program information when the authentication is normally finished.

30. (new) A method as in claim 29 wherein the license-issuing computer issues a license key for a program specified by a license program name.

31. (new) A license issuing method of a license-issuing computer which is connected to a network and performs the issuance of a license key through the network, the license issuing method including:

a step in which the license-issuing computer receives a product number, a license program name, but not client information, the product number and the license program name which a purchaser inputs;

a step in which the license-issuing computer authenticates the product number;

a step in which the license-issuing computer issues a trial license key to allow use of a program specified by the license program name for a given period;

a step in which the license-issuing computer receives the product number, the license program name and the trial license key, the product number, the license program name and the trial license key which a purchaser inputs from the seller computer through the network,

a step in which the license-issuing computer performs authentication of the trial license key; and

a step in which the license-issuing computer issues a special license key which extends a trial period.

32. (new) A license issuing method characterized in that the license issuing method according to claim 31 issues the license for a program installed in a data storage system.